

Market Street for the Masses Coalition

December 1, 2014

Citizens Advisory Committee
for the Central Market & Tenderloin Area
c/o Tim Ho, Office of the City Administrator
City Hall, 1 Dr Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Citizens Advisory Committee,

Thank you for all of your efforts to make the 2015 Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) process meaningful and reflective of community needs. Given all that has transpired the past couple of months, we wanted to provide you with our position at this point in the process.

As you know, MSMC is a collective voice of community organizations and neighborhood residents in the Mid-Market, Tenderloin, and South of Market neighborhoods which formed in 2012. While we do not represent all of the non-profits and residents in the area, our 31 member organizations do serve a variety of constituencies and address a broad range of economic, educational, and social issues.

Our Requests

On September 23, 2014, we wrote a letter to the six CBA companies, outlining our requests of them for this CBA season. The following actions would go a long way toward mitigating the displacement and other tensions we have been experiencing as a community since the Mid-Market development began.

- 1) Support the first phase of creating a Mid-Market/Tenderloin Acquisition Fund. This would enable nonprofits to buy and preserve affordable housing, office space and small business space in the neighborhood.
- 2) Create a mechanism to ensure meaningful orientation for employees into the neighborhood.
In addition to physical displacement, there is a psychological displacement that comes when people start feeling like they are no longer welcome in their neighborhoods. This could be as a result of losing their affordable neighborhood businesses, the perception that they are being judged or looked down upon by those who have greater means, or the feeling of being implicated in references about making the neighborhood “cleaner” or “safer.” When some people no longer feel welcome or supported in their communities, it becomes less healthy and more unsafe for everyone. If we truly seek a diverse community, rich in culture, the arts, and a variety of viewpoints, we must build bridges. We believe meaningful orientation for new employees is a good starting point.

Status of Our Requests

We have made great progress with the CBA companies on the second request. Almost all of the companies have made verbal commitments to include meaningful employee orientation in their CBA agreements. Some have already begun to implement it, and many of the companies have also offered to host activities and education forums in their spaces. We believe this is an absolutely necessary step to mitigating some of the tension that has developed in the Mid-Market community between those who

have long lived and worked here and those who are coming in. We encourage the CAC to reject any CBA that does not contain this item.

The Acquisition Fund has been more challenging to launch. Although MSMC has worked with experts in the field to create a clear structure and use for the Fund, its success requires collaboration with both the business community and the City. Unfortunately, we still lack City leadership, engagement, and support at this time. In fact, there have been recent efforts to sideline the conversation around displacement, even when our members and their constituents have called it out as the greatest issue facing the Mid-Market community today.

We have said before that MSMC doesn't wish to place blame for the displacement on the companies that are locating here. However, it is a secondary impact of the development that is occurring. While we are disappointed that the CBA companies are not likely to support the Acquisition Fund in their agreements this year, we find it difficult to reject their CBAs on these grounds when the City itself appears to be actively resisting its launch. We do, however, expect the CBA companies to participate in finding solutions to displacement, and we have discussed this compromise with the companies. We encourage the CAC to reject the CBA of any company that has not demonstrated a clear commitment to actively engage in regular discussions with community partners and the City in seeking solutions to displacement.

Next Steps

In 2015, MSMC will continue to strengthen our relationships with the CBA companies and expand our reach to other companies who are not required to sign publicly-vetted CBA agreements. We will create opportunities to educate and dialogue with the larger community around the social justice issues faced by our members and their constituents. We will also continue our work to mitigate displacement, calling on the City itself to meaningfully engage with its most vulnerable and disenfranchised residents.

Thank you again for your time and careful attention to representing community needs in this process.

In partnership,



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Members of Market Street for the Masses Coalition:

ABD Productions
AfroSolo Theater Company
AIDS Housing Alliance/SF
The ARC San Francisco
Asian Neighborhood Design
Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center
Catholic Charities CYO
Coalition on Homelessness
Community Housing Partnership
Compass Family Services
CounterPULSE

Curry Senior Center
De Marillac Academy
DISH (Delivering Innovation in Supportive Housing)
Episcopal Community Services
Eviction Defense Collaborative
Faithful Fools Street Ministry
The Gubbio Project
Hamilton Family Center
Hospitality House
Larkin Street Youth Services
North of Market/Tenderloin CBD

SF Contemporary Music Players
Shih Yu-Lang Central YMCA
Senior & Disability Action
SOMCAN (SOMA Community Action Network)
St. Anthony Foundation
St. Francis Living Room
TNDC
Veterans Equity Center – BISHOP
Youth With A Mission